

## From the Editor

PAUL Henry Crank's illustration on our wrap-around cover this month commemorates an important day in our history. June 14, 1775, marked the birth of the American Army. An army that would over two centuries promote and protect freedom throughout the world, both in war and in peace. This month we celebrate the 225th birthday of the Army of Lexington and Yorktown; of Chapultepec, Manassas and Gettysburg; of San Juan, St. Mihiel and Meuse-Argonne; of Kaserine, Normandy and Bastogne; of Porkchop Hill, Khe Sanh and Hue; of 73 Easting and Mogadishu. That Army stands today as the best army on the planet, largely because of the people who serve.

We also want to keep you focused on the future. In that effort we offer continuing coverage of the Army's transformation process in a series of articles by Heike Hasenauer beginning on page 14.

And finally, we at *Soldiers* want to acknowledge the work of photographer Kimberly Garrett, who has taken photos of some of the great paintings being featured this year in our back-cover series, "Portraits of Patriotism."

*Ray Whithead*

## Drill Sergeants

I WOULD like to make a comment about the April 2000 Briefings article "Army Seeks Drill Sergeant Volunteers."

The article said: "A drill sergeant's chances for promotion are better than for NCOs without drill sergeant experience." In the last paragraph the article provides a statistic saying that of the 1,178 command sergeants major, 532 are former drill sergeants.

A quick calculation shows that fewer than half (45 percent) of the current command sergeants major have drill-sergeant experience. It appears to me that an NCO has a better chance (55 percent) of making command sergeant major without drill sergeant experience. The last sentence states that of the 14 corps and division command sergeants major, 10 have drill-sergeant experience. Of those 14 command sergeants major, how many came up through the ranks in non-combat arms MOSs? Without knowing any of them, I would say it is probably zero.

I believe the statement misleads combat support and combat service support NCOs by implying that if they become drill sergeants they have a chance to one day hold a corps or division command sergeant major position when, in reality, I don't believe they have any chance.

*David Harris  
via e-mail*

## Thanks for Memories

THANK you for the excellent April article about the Kaiserslautern Middle School and my old student, SSG Mark Botwinick.

Could you please forward to me, in electrons, a copy of the April cover and the Focus

## Certified Firefighters

AS A 51M (Firefighter) in the U.S. Army, I am disturbed to see soldiers of other MOSs performing firefighting tasks as reflected in your April article, "Afire in Okinawa." Petroleum distribution units are not authorized 51M positions. According to Army doctrine (FM 5-415) each petroleum supply company and pipeline/terminal company will be allocated one engineer firefighting unit which is trained to perform all types of firefighting, including crash rescue.

All military firefighters (51M) are required to be Department of Defense-certified in accordance with National Fire Protection Association standards. These standards prescribe precisely what each firefighter must be able to do. The presence of military firefighting detachments in theaters of operation is not commonly known or understood, but we must ensure that we utilize the correct MOS-trained personnel in deployments and exercises.

*SFC Leroy Ward  
Fort Lewis, Wash.*



on People story, with picture, from page 28? I would like to forward it through DODDS channels (the Army Reserve covered the story, not DODDS).

By the way, the Army Reserve Command that covered the story was the 7th, not the 77th, Army Reserve Command. It is located in Schwetzingen, Germany, and its PAO is MAJ Burt Masters.

Thank you for your kind consideration and help.

*Dr. Holt. D. Theis  
via e-mail*

## Taxpayer Money

IN your April "Focus on People" section you featured a money-saving initiative pioneered by William D. Evans of Tobyhana Army Depot. In the text of the article you said the proposal is "expected to save the Army several million dollars..." and the caption under the associated

photo says "saved the government millions."

It may seem like a small point, but there is no such thing as "government" or even "Army" money. There is only taxpayer money. We taxpayers entrust our hard-earned dollars to the custody of the federal government in hopes that it will be used wisely. Those of us whose salary is paid by the taxpayer are doubly obligated to make sure that each dollar is spent carefully and wisely. As a taxpayer, my hat is off to Mr. Evans for saving some of the dollars taken from us every month. As a means of reminding us that taxpayer money is always ours, no matter who's spending it, I recommend you drop the terms "government money" and "Army money." The term "taxpayer money" reminds us all whose money it really is.

*MAJ Kris Pettigrew  
Fort Eustis, Va.*

## Leery of Credit Card

AS a Reserve officer I often travel for military training around the country. When the new travel card policy was first announced (April "Briefings"), I was leery. Now I'm opposed.

Though DFAS has "promised" that travel reimbursement will be "timely," they have wisely provided for the possibility that they "might" sometimes be late. Therefore, DFAS has generously offered to pay late fees. I wonder, however, how the federal government intends to repair soldiers' credit reports? When soldiers apply for car loans, mortgages, or other credit, credit reports will only show that XYZ account was late — not that DFAS was slow in processing 1351s. I, for one, intend to capitalize upon the policy loophole and pay cash for everything. I'd rather carry \$1,000 in cash than \$1,000 in dubious government "credit."

1LT Russell Burgos, USAR  
via e-mail

## Cold War Certificate

IN September, I followed a link to the website you listed for Cold War certificates and, as a disabled Army veteran, applied for one. I have not yet received the certificate, and the website previously given fails to respond. Has this program been discontinued, or has the volume of requests caused a delay in processing? By the way, I just discovered that the website has been changed to <http://coldwar.army.mil> for the certificates authorized by Congress.

Walter Johnson  
via e-mail

A VISIT to the site you gave confirmed the delay in processing requests.

## Poster Ping

THE January uniform poster shows a female officer with a uniform deficiency. AR 670-1, chapter 28-17, paragraph b(1), states: "When badges from groups 1 to 3 are worn with badges from groups 4 and 5, the badges from groups 4 and 5 will be worn side by side below the ribbons or on the pocket flap in order of group precedence from the wearer's right to left."

NCOs at AMEDD BNCOC  
via e-mail

THANK you for the correction. Meantime, MSG Kittie L. Messman, Army uniform policy proponent, reminds that information pertaining to awards and criteria can be found on the Internet at [www.perscom.army.mil/tagd/awards/index.htm](http://www.perscom.army.mil/tagd/awards/index.htm) and that the uniform website is [www.odcsper.army.mil/default.asp?pagid=69f](http://www.odcsper.army.mil/default.asp?pagid=69f).

## Appreciate Website

I JUST wanted express appreciation for what **Soldiers Online** has done for alumni of the 14th

Infantry, and alumni of other units, by making the active Army available to those of us who are inactive or retired.

The union between **Soldiers Online** for current events and historical websites documenting unit histories should be strengthened and improved.

The 14th's website, [www.1-14th.com](http://www.1-14th.com), has found one article describing the 1/14th's efforts at Fort Irwin and another dealing with 3/14th and "Urban Combat." Keeping historical unit websites current is difficult. **Soldiers Online** helps make that difficulty less burdensome and a lot more of a pleasure. Thanks again.

Robert H. Wilson Jr.  
via e-mail


## Extra Copies

REQUEST additional copies each month of **Soldiers** (30 copies instead of 18). We have recently reorganized and our name has changed from OPTEC (Operational Testing) to ATEC (U.S. Army Test and Evaluation Command).

Judy Laidig  
Alexandria, Va.

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